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Contact: Emily Carney
(517) 373-1725

Senator McManus Urges Snowmobile Caution

Recent Deaths Prompt Legislator to Issue Public Service Announcement

(LANSING) – Due to the recent snowmobile tragedies in northern Michigan, state Senator Michelle McManus, R-Lake Leelanau, has recorded a public service announcement for radio stations across the 35th Senate District reminding snowmobilers to exercise caution while participating in the sport.

“Due to the unfortunate deaths recently in northern Michigan it is essential that the public knows of the dangers involved in snowmobiling,” McManus said. “While the sport possesses a high level of excitement, it is still mandatory that residents exercise extreme caution to make sure they are free from harm.”

Several snowmobilers and ice anglers fell through ice on various bodies of water throughout the state recently, including two snowmobilers on Long Lake Jan. 9.

Those planning to spend their day on frozen waterways in the upcoming weeks are being urged by Senator McManus to follow these guidelines to help keep safe:

- Four inches of ice will generally hold an average-sized person on foot. Snowmobiles and ORV's need at least eight inches of solid, consistent ice.
- Ice does not form with uniform thickness on any body of water. Underwater springs or currents can wear thin spots on any body of water.
- Clear ice is the strongest. Ice formed by melted and re-frozen snow appears milky, is very porous and weak. Ice covered by snow should be presumed unsafe.

Residents traveling on ice are encouraged to check with local law enforcement or Department of Natural Resource officials regarding ice conditions before heading onto unfamiliar water. Snowmobiles should avoid riding single-file across frozen water, and everyone traversing on ice should always wear a life jacket.